APPENDIX 1

Policy for Approval and Review of Academic Programs and Units

February 10, 2005
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The University of Toronto is committed to excellence in all our academic programs. Thus, quality assurance through assessment of new program proposals and review of academic programs and units in which they reside is a priority for the University.

This Policy outlines university-wide principles for the approval of proposed new academic programs and the review of existing academic programs and academic units. The Policy aligns the University's quality assurance processes and the provincial Quality Assurance Framework.

The purpose of the Policy is to establish consistency at the University so that:

- Proposals for new undergraduate and graduate degree and diploma programs undergo thorough appraisal to ensure that they are of high academic quality and merit.
- Existing programs are externally reviewed on a cyclical basis to assess their academic quality and merit.
- Program appraisals and reviews include consideration of degree level expectations.
- The processes of appraisal and review provide governance the wherewithal to make approvals or recommendations. The review processes must address the quality of programs, and how the programs and the units in which they reside compare to the best in their field among international peer institutions.
- The quality of the scholarship of the faculty, and the degree to which that scholarship is brought to bear in teaching are the foundations of academic excellence. More generally, all of the factors that contribute to collegial and scholarly life —academic and administrative complement, research and scholarly activity, infrastructure, governance, etc.—bear on the quality of academic programs and the broad educational experience of students. Reviews are intended to help assess and then improve quality in all of these aspects.

Scope

This Policy applies to submissions for approval of new academic undergraduate and graduate programs, and the reviews of existing programs and academic units that offer programs. Reviews of programs are commissioned by academic administrators at the University of Toronto.

For the purpose of this Policy, a "program" is defined as an identified set and sequence of courses and other learning opportunities within an area of study, which is completed in full or partial fulfillment of the requirements for the granting of an undergraduate, second-entry, or graduate degree. This Policy applies to all such programs to which resources are dedicated.

Procedures

1) Administrative procedures for the approval and review of academic programs will be set by the Office of the Vice-President and Provost, within the *University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process,* as ratified by the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance (the Quality Council) and reported for information to Governing Council.
2) The *University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process* will address the protocols by which approvals and reviews will be conducted, the content of the required documents, as well as the circulation of proposals and reports to governance.
3) Authority for periodically revising and ensuring implementation of the *University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process* and associated manuals rests with the Office of the Vice-President and Provost. Changes to the procedures will be presented to Governing Council for information.
4) Reviews of academic programs by external bodies form part of collegial self-regulatory systems to ensure that mutually agreed-upon threshold standards of quality are maintained in proposed and existing programs. Such assessments may serve different purposes than those commissioned by the University. In conducting a review of a program or unit, external reviewers should be presented, where appropriate, with any non-University commissioned reviews (for example, professional accreditation or Ontario Council on Graduate Studies) completed since the last review of the program or unit.
5) Where possible, the University process should aim to streamline the review process by aligning the scheduling of undergraduate program reviews, graduate program reviews and reviews of academic units.

Accountability

1) New Programs

The assessment of proposed new programs is part of our governance procedures. Proposal assessment is a critical process that ensures the quality and merit of the proposal is fully developed before entering governance so that appropriate decisions can be made as to whether the program should be established.

2) Existing Programs and Units

Reviews are important mechanisms of accountability. Academic administrators are accountable for the discharge of their responsibilities through a line of accountability that reaches from chairs and directors to deans and principals to the Provost to the President and ultimately to University governance. As part of this structure of accountability, governors have a responsibility to ensure that appropriate mechanisms for reviewing academic programs with a view to ensuring and improving their quality are in place.

APPENDIX A

Accountability Framework for Cyclical Review of Academic Programs and Units

Responsible Agent	**Responsibilities**	**Mechanism**
Governing Council:	Ensuring that University administration is monitoring the quality of academic programs and units and is taking the necessary steps to address problems and achieve improvements	Receive program review report (including summaries of all reviews) and record of AP&P and Executive Committee discussion
a) Executive Committee	Monitoring overall review audit process; identification of any changes required in process; discussion of any major unresolved issues with President and Provost	Receive program review report (including summaries of all reviews) and record of AP&P discussion
b) Agenda Committee of Academic Board	Identifying any specific academic issues raised by the overview of reviews that warrant discussion by the Academic Board	Receive program review report (including summaries of all reviews) and record of AP&P discussion
c) Committee on Academic Policy and Programs	Undertaking a comprehensive overview of review results and administrative responses	Receive program review report including summaries of all reviews, identifying key issues and administrative responses. Discuss report at dedicated program review meeting with relevant academic leadership; forward to Executive Committee
Provost	Monitoring quality of all academic programs and units in the University and taking necessary steps to address problems and achieve improvements	Ensure all programs, and the units in which they reside, are reviewed on a cyclical basis not to exceed eight years. Commission reviews of Faculties Receive reviews of programs and academic units Prepare summaries of reviews and administrative responses Forwarding to Governing Council
Deans	Monitoring quality of all academic programs and units in the Faculty and taking necessary steps to address problems and achieve improvements	Commission and respond to reviews of academic programs, and the units in which the programs reside, within the Faculty and programs that are offered jointly with external institutions.